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THE NEGRO AND THE CENSUS.

A bulletin just issued by the federal census bureau exhibits in an interesting light the growth of the negro element in our population. According to the returns of the census of 1900, the negro population of the United States, including continental United States, Alaska, Hawaii and Porto Rico, numbered 9,204,531. For continental United States alone the negro population was 8,833,994—11.6 per cent of the total population. The growth for the decade was 18.1 per cent against a growth of 13.9 for the decade from 1880 to 1890. Some alarm was expressed at this showing when the census figures were first published, about three years ago. It was argued that the negro race, not being reinforced and augmented by a constant stream of immigration, was, in fact, outgrowing the white race; for the entire white increase for the period from 1890 to 1900 was only 21.2 per cent. Should immigration cease or dwindle, it was suggested, we should be face to face with the unpleasant spectacle of an inferior, and formerly servile, element in our population replenishing itself more rapidly and steadily than the superior and dominant element in our civilization.

But a complete study of the census returns hardly warrants so unpalatable a conclusion. The bureau's study of the vital statistics of the negro race in this country demonstrates that it cannot under present conditions keep pace in growth with the Caucasian element. A higher negro birth rate may be admitted; but, as might be expected, the negro death rate far outruns the white death rate. From 1890 to 1900 the negro death rate is put relatively at 30, against 17 for the white population. Notwithstanding its fecundity, the negro race has lost ground in numbers, compared with the white, during the whole of the nineteenth century. In 1790, 19.3 per cent of the total population of the United States was negro. By 1840 the negro percentage had fallen to 16.8. In 1890 it was only 11.9, and in 1900 it fell still further to 11.6. Including the Philippines, with other non-continental territory, the proportion of the negro population under the flag falls today well below 10 per cent—less than half its relative strength a century ago.

The trend of the negro toward city life is noticeable even in a section so distinctly rural as the south. In the southern country districts the negro increase from 1890 to 1900 averaged about 16 per cent; for the towns and cities of the same region the increase was 21.7 per cent. In five of the larger southern cities the negro population actually outgrew the white population, the rate for the former being 25.8 and for the latter 20.8. This acceleration was due, of course, to immigration from the country districts. Baltimore, Washington, Memphis and New Orleans are the four centers whose negro population is increasing most rapidly. Each of these cities, with the country tributary to it, has a negro colony exceeding 75,000.

One marked sign of the lower vitality of the black race is found in the fact that half the negroes in the United States are under 19 years of age. The median line for the white race is 23—a disparity which speaks for itself. There is nothing in this study of negro growth during the last decade to encourage the idea that the race is taking a more important place as an element in our population, or that it can extort, by force of numbers at least, a fuller recognition of its value as a factor in our civilization.

THE IMMIGRATION RECORD.

Commissioner Sargent of the immigration bureau is represented as being "hopeful that last year's immigration record will not have been passed" during the fiscal year that closed on June 30. He is quite confident that, had it not been for the "cut-rate war between the trans-Atlantic steamship companies," there would have been a considerable falling off in immigration for the fiscal year of 1904 as compared with the preceding year.

Evidently, Commissioner Sargent is of an optimistic temperament, says the New York Commercial.

For the 11 months ended on May 31—at that date the trans-Atlantic steamship cut-rate war had scarcely begun—the number of aliens landing on our shores amounted to 740,000. That record, even for a full fiscal year, has been surpassed only twice—namely, in 1903 and in 1882. In 1898 the number of new comers to this country fell as low as 229,000, while the yearly average for the decade ended with 1902 was only 380,000.

Contrast these figures with the tremendous volume of immigration in 1903, amounting to 857,000—a number greater than the combined population of the states of New Hampshire and Rhode Island and nearly equal to the population of the state of Connecticut or of West Virginia! There are 26 states of the union that have a smaller population than the number of immigrants—practically 1,600,000—that arrived on our shores during 1903 and in the 11 months of 1904 ended on May 31.

It is impossible to view this overwhelming deluge of aliens without feelings of apprehension—feelings that are rendered not less acute by the reflection that the bulk of this mass of humanity comes from sections of Europe where poverty is the deepest and illiteracy the greatest. That the effect of this horde of immigrants will be toward lowering the standard of American citizenship can hardly be doubted.

The time is plainly at hand for drawing more closely the lines against the admission of foreigners to this republic. There is a limit even to this intelligent and progressive nation's capacity for the "benevolent assimilation" of aliens—of people who are not only alien in race and language but in habits, customs and morals, and who are total strangers to free institutions.

AMERICA'S LARGEST BANKS.

The American Banker publishes a list of all the banks in the United States doing a commercial banking business whose gross commercial deposits exceed \$5,000,000. The reports are based upon the latest report to the comptroller of the currency, or, in the case of state banks, to the state. There are 164 institutions in the list, which is headed by the National City Bank of New York, whose deposits amounted on June 9 last to the enormous total of \$184,156,142. The next three banks in the list are each located at New York city also, the National Bank of Commerce with deposits of \$180,633,509; the First National Bank, deposits, \$110,525,277, and the National Park Bank, deposits, \$90,516,997. Forty of the 164 banks in the list are located in New York city.

The banks having the largest deposits in each of the other leading commercial centers of the country are the following: First National Bank, Chicago, deposits, \$89,179,693. Five of the first 15 banks in the list are located at Chicago. The National Shawmut Bank of Boston has the largest deposits of any bank in New England, \$54,000,028, and is ninth in the list. A St. Louis bank, the National Bank of Commerce, has deposits of \$46,827,718, and is tenth in the United States in the volume of deposits. The Philadelphia National Bank has deposits of \$33,318,777, and is the 18th in the United States. Kansas City has a bank with deposits of \$30,776,979, which ranks 21st in the list. The next city to appear in the list is Pittsburg, whose largest bank has deposits of nearly \$20,000,000, and is 37th in the list. Denver holds the next place, its largest bank having deposits of \$19,282,297. There are 45 banks with deposits of \$15,000,000 and upwards, 20 of which are located at New York city, nine at Chicago, four at Boston, four at Philadelphia, three at St. Louis, two at Kansas City, two at Pittsburg and one at Denver.

Other cities that figure in the list, having one or more banks with deposits exceeding \$5,000,000 each, are Milwaukee, Buffalo, Albany, Detroit, San Francisco, New Orleans, Cleveland, Baltimore, Washington, Minneapolis, Seranton, Cincinnati, Portland, Ore.; Omaha, Indianapolis, Newark, Los Angeles, Pueblo, St. Paul, Jersey City, Birmingham, Ala.; Dallas, Duluth and Rochester. One hundred and sixty-four banks having deposits of \$5,000,000 and upwards each are located in only 32 different cities. Nine of these banks only are on the Pacific coast, six of which are at San Francisco, two at Los Angeles and one at Portland. San Francisco's largest bank ranks 52nd in the United States, Portland's is 105th and Los Angeles' 122nd.

Only those men who are actively engaged in the publication of newspapers can have any accurate idea of the enormity of the work of properly reporting such an event as the St. Louis convention. The Associated Press handled the big convention in excellent manner and gave to its patrons service never before equaled. The Associated Press is truly a great news-gathering institution, enabling the people of every city of consequence in the union to be as thoroughly in touch with world happenings as are the people of the great centers of population. In its general scheme calculated to maintain a high order of excellence in its service the Associated Press has not erred in placing at the head of its northwest department Mr. Sydney B. Vincent.

ATTACKS TITLE

Packers' Right to Desdemona Sands Disputed.

Question Involves the Boundary Line Between the States of Oregon and Washington.

Oregon Journal: Litigation which will involve the adjustment of the Washington-Oregon boundary line at the mouth of the Columbia river and the ownership of several thousand dollars' worth of salmon grounds will shortly be waged in the federal courts. The suit will be defended by the Columbia River Packers' Association, which claims title to 106 acres of ground in the Desdemona Sands, the tract now in dispute, and B. F. Hueston the surveyor-lawyer and son of former County Treasurer Hueston of South Bend, will attempt to show the imperfection of the title of the packing company, and his own right to the property by value of an application of sale in the land office, at tide land rates.

Trouble an Old One.

The location of the boundary line between the states of Washington and Oregon, which is so doubtful that it has long been the cause of clashes in authority between the fish commissioners of the two states, has cast doubt on the title to much of the tideland property in the river, and it is on this doubt that the young surveyor-lawyer will fight the case. If the tract is within the Oregon boundary, the title of the packing company is flawless, as they possess a deed from the Oregon land office. But, on the other hand, should Hueston succeed in proving that the tract is within the Washington boundary, as he hopes to do, the deed from Oregon will be of little avail.

While the lands in dispute are very valuable, it is doubtful if their real value will be considered, as the law of this state provides that detached tide lands be sold to the first applicant at a flat rate of \$5 per acre.

Hueston Expected to Fight.

It is believed that Hueston has applied for the lands fully expecting that litigation will result, but as \$5 per acre represents so small a fractional part of their value, the lands are well worth fighting for.

If the state of Washington refuses to sell the tidelands applied for, Hueston will apply to the courts for a writ of mandamus to compel the state authorities to sell in accordance with the law.

If the state attempts to sell, then some move from the Oregon claimants may be expected. Fulton Bros. of Astoria, of which firm United States Senator Fulton of Oregon is a member, have already filed in behalf of the fishing combine a protest against the attempted sale of the Desdemona Sands, and without waiving any of their rights have offered to pay the state of Washington a reasonable sum for the lands in order to clear away all clouds to their title.

Boundary Defined.

The boundary line between Washington and Oregon is described in the Washington constitution as follows:

"Beginning at a point in the Pacific ocean one marine league due west and opposite the middle of the mouth of the north ship channel of the said river, and where it is divided by islands up the middle of the widest channel thereof to where the 46th parallel of north latitude crosses the river," etc.

At best, the description is indefinite and since the adoption of the boundary, the channels have shifted and the uncertain location of the line has often caused conflict of authority in enforcing the fishing laws of Washington and Oregon, which are lacking in uniformity, and has placed doubtful title on tidelands near any of the channels of the river.

Concurrent Legislation Attempted.

The Washington legislation in 1899 adopted a concurrent resolution calling for the appointment of boundary commissions by the governors of Oregon and Washington and appropriated \$1200 for surveys. It is said that the Oregon legislature failed to take similar action and nothing came of the resolution. In 1903, Governor Rogers' message deals with the question and recommends concurrent action by the two states.

In the meantime the question has remained unsettled and many purchasers of tidelands in the river have paid both states for deeds in order to have clear titles.

Excuse to Settle Question.

The Washington land office has not yet investigated the conditions existing at Desdemona Sands, and it is not known here whether or not a reasonable contention can be made that the lands are on the Washington side. It

has been suggested that if there is a reasonable ground for believing such to be the case, here is a golden opportunity for the state of Washington to claim title to them and thereby get the boundary question into the federal courts and settle it once for all time.

The people back of Hueston have also stirred up considerable trouble in Bakers bay, near the mouth of the Columbia, although here the boundary line between the two states is not a factor in the question. A tract of over 100 acres lies in the bay, detached from the mainland, and is, therefore, subject to sale at the flat rate of \$5 per acre to the first applicant. Fish traps have been located on the lands for a number of years, however, the trapowners now paying a license of \$50 per year on each trap to the state. I. C. Webb of Tacoma, who is represented by Hueston, has filed on the lands and a protest has come up from the fishtrap owners.

More Revenue From Licenses.

The state is now receiving probably more money each year from fishtraps located on the islands than it would receive from the sale of the lands at \$5 per acre, and the question will arise as to whether the state can be compelled to sell the lands when applied for.

That litigation will follow the decision of the Washington authorities is considered inevitable, and it is possible that thereby the long-vexed question as to the location of the boundary will be finally determined.

The tract Hueston is seeking to possess is valued at \$15,000, but at \$5 per acre would only cost a fraction of that amount.



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